The scientific study "Flowers in the Cemetery," commissioned by the Police Academy, demonstrates the biased nature of scientific research. Similarities between paranoid delusions and conspiracy theories are unilaterally projected onto the general public in our society. This constitutes sloppy journalism and scientific practice. Certainly, there are conspiracy theorists with paranoid traits and delusions among the national citizenry. This is undeniable, but unilaterally projecting a study onto all citizens of society goes too far. Therefore,

The IFUD of Human Rights has compiled several articles on this topic by academics. Paranoia and delusions also occur in higher echelons, even in politics. People talk about "white-collar" issues.

Conspiracy theories are popular during the coronavirus pandemic. Conspiracy thinking is characterized by the strong belief that a particular situation, perceived as unjust, is the result of a deliberate conspiracy by a group of people with malicious intent. Conspiracy thinking seems
to have many similarities with paranoid delusions, source: JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY - VOLUME 63 -
NOVEMBER 2021, Scientific research: “Are conspiracy thinkers psychotic? A comparison between conspiracy theories and
paranoid delusions” W. Veling, B. Sizoo, J. van Buuren, C. van den Berg, W. Sewbalak, G.H.M. Pijnenborg, N. Boonstra, S. Castelein, L. van der
More.

Flowers at the cemetery
Tackling a conspiracy theory in Bodegraven.
And what we can learn from it, source:
Marnix Eysink Smeets
Hans Moors
Linda de Veen
Marius Koelink
A study commissioned by the Police & Science Programme
This publication is the result of a study carried out by the research agencies
EMMA and LEV, with the cooperation of the Social Media, Security & Research Group
Justice from Inholland University of Applied Sciences, and funded by the Police & Research Programme
Science (P&W) of the Police Academy.
February 2025

Psychopathy: From Criminality to Leadership

We are dealing with white-collar psychopaths who are completely intellectually intact.

Source: Open University, article GGZ-totaal in 2021

Reference books:

Snakes in Suits

“How to get rid of psychopaths in politics”

Are conspiracy theorists psychotic? A comparison between conspiracy theories and paranoid delusions

W. Veling, B. Sizoo, J. van Buuren, C. van den Berg, W. Sewbalak, G. H. M. Pijnenborg, N. Boonstra, S. Castelein, L. van der Meer

Background: Conspiracy theories are popular during the coronavirus pandemic. Conspiracy thinking is characterized by the strong belief that a particular situation, perceived as unjust, is the result of a deliberate conspiracy by a group of people with malicious intent. Conspiracy thinking appears to have many similarities with paranoid delusions.

Objective To explore the nature, consequences and social-psychological dimensions of conspiracy thinking and to describe similarities and differences with paranoid delusions.

Method Critically reviewing relevant literature on conspiracy thinking and paranoid delusions.

Results Conspiracy thinking meets epistemic, existential, and social needs. It provides clarity in uncertain times. times and joining a group of like-minded people. Both conspiracy thinking and paranoid delusions involve false, persistent, and sometimes bizarre beliefs. Unlike conspiracy thinkers, however, people with paranoid delusions are almost always the sole target of the supposed conspiracy and are largely alone in their beliefs. Furthermore, conspiracy ideas are less based on unusual experiences of the self, reality, or interpersonal interactions.

Conclusions Conspiracy thinking is common in uncertain circumstances. It gives people stability, certainty, and moral Superiority and social support. Extreme conspiracy thinking appears to fit within the current psychiatric definitions of paranoid delusions, yet there are also important differences. To distinguish it from conspiracy thinking, current definitions of delusions require further clarification. Instead of the strong focus on the erroneous content of delusions, more attention should be paid to the underlying idiosyncratic, altered perception of reality.

Uncertain and disruptive times like the coronavirus pandemic are fertile ground for conspiracy theories. Many people are concerned about the immense power of the economic and political elite in the

world and want to give meaning to what is happening around them. During the pandemic, governments and large companies have been given room to manoeuvre and have taken steps that citizens have little insight into and hardly any influence on have control over. Society went into lockdown, a number of civil liberties were temporarily suspended and government was governed on the basis of emergency decrees.

It is therefore not surprising that dissatisfaction among people has increased and that mistrust sometimes grows into conspiracy thinking.

This is how the World Economic Forum's *Great* Reset proposal

The mic Forum, launched in 2020 to rebuild the global economy in a more sustainable way after the coronavirus pandemic, has been seen as a deliberate conspiracy by corporations and governments to achieve global hegemony.

Many conspiracy theories, however, are more extreme. From a For example, a 2020 Kieskompas survey showed that 5.6% of respondents found it (very) credible that a chip is injected with the corona vaccine

to continue monitoring people permanently (Kieskompas 2020). There are also people who are convinced that the 'New World Order' is using the pandemic as a cover to secretly murder children on a large scale.

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To quote
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sexual abuse. Conspiracy theories evoke many emotions, particularly fear, outrage, anger, and frustration (Douglas et al. 2017).
At first glance, there are many similarities between paranoid delusions and conspiracy theories. With paranoid delusions, people are convinced that someone, a organization, force or power wants to harm them. Delusions vary on a wide range of dimensions such as bizarreness, the degree of conviction, the degree of preoccupation and the extent to which the thoughts cause distress (van der Zwaard 2006; Van Os & Reininghaus, 2016). According to DSM-5, the core of a delusion is that it a false persistent belief that is not susceptible to change despite evidence to the contrary

on the contrary.

The content of conspiracy theories, like that of delusions, is often improbable, and sometimes even downright bizarre to say the least. These are far-reaching paranoid ideas about high-ranking individuals, international companies and shadowy elites who attack the safety and freedom of ordinary people. Despite a lack of evidence or even proof to the contrary, even conspiracy theorists hold firmly to their beliefs.
All of this raises the question of whether conspiracy thinking should be considered a delusion. In this article, we explore the phenomenon of conspiracy thinking and examine the similarities and differences between it and

delusions.

Conspiracy thinking – phenomenon and consequences

Most definitions of conspiracy theories are very derogatory towards those who adhere to these theories

gen. A more neutral definition is derived from Birchall: 'constructions that reflect an individual or social situation or situation that is perceived as unjust or intolerable' explain development by presenting this situation as the deliberate result of a group of people secretly working together with evil intentions' (Bir-chall 2006).

The corona crisis has all the elements that com-

Conspiracy thinking. A global event with a major impact on human lives and unprecedented consequences for society calls for grandiose explanations (Räikkä 2009). The compelling nature of the government measures combined with reduced autonomy for citizens fuel resistance, distrust and anti-authoritarian sentiments. At the same time, uncertainty about the nature, course and control of the pandemic makes alternative explanations attractive.

What is the use of conspiracy thinking?

One way to understand conspiracy thinking is to to look at the motives of conspiracy theorists. In the literature, epistemic, existential and social motives are distinguished (Douglas et al. 2017). In a In an increasingly confusing world, people have an epistemic need for stability (Harambam 2017).
We long for clear explanations for overwhelming, intangible, and uncontrollable events. Conspiracy theorists simplify reality by choosing a single, definitive explanation for events and selecting information that fits it.

and then no longer allowing room for alter-

Native explanations. This "cognitive closure" makes reality knowable and comprehensible again (Jameson 1988). Better a conclusive explanation than uncertainty, even if this explanation is logically unprovable,
difficult to maintain or internally contradictory.
Existential motives are that conspiracy theories promise safety and more control in situations where
People feel anxious and powerless. When people distrust government agencies and large corporations and are dissatisfied with the sociopolitical reality, they can use conspiracy theories to give meaning to
a confusing and sometimes hostile reality, rationalize problems and setbacks and reduce feelings of helplessness (McArthur 1995).

Finally, there are social motives for conspiracy thinking, because conspiracy theories connect with a
in-group, which means identity, connectedness and a certain superiority over the ignorant masses *(out-group)* (Douglas et al. 2017). Conspiracy theorists are *rebels with a cause;* in other words, conspiracy thinking benefits people.

Pre-corona crisis population studies showed that conspiracy thinkers are relatively more likely to be male, less educated, single, unemployed and belong to an ethnic minority
belong (Freeman et al. 2020). They more often have physical and psychological complaints, more often a psychiatric disorder, less self-confidence and less connection with other people. They experience themselves as lower
on the social ladder compared to others.
However, recent English population research shows that conspiracy thinking has become more *mainstream* . About half of respondents believed to some extent that the virus was a Chinese-developed virus.
bioweapon is to destroy the West, and about a fifth believed to some extent that the Jews created the virus to destroy the economy for financial gain
to collapse. The distrust has set in
A large part of the population has settled in. Conspiracy theorists during the coronavirus pandemic therefore less often fit the older characterization (Freeman et al. 2020).

Negative consequences of conspiracy thinking

The consequences of conspiracy thinking are as diverse as the conspiracy constructs themselves and their benefits to individuals. Conspiracy thinking does not necessarily have a negative effect on the conspiracy thinkers themselves, their environment, or society. But negative consequences can arise.
are.

Increasing uncertainty

While the motive is to gain more certainty and control
In practice, it turns out that the feeling of uncertainty and dependency actually increases, which also leads to increased distrust of social institutions (Douglas et al. 2017). This increases susceptibility to even more conspiracy theories. Becoming entangled in an increasing number of disturbing conspiracy theories

plotting can go quickly.

Isolation and decline

Conspiracy theorists let their supporters know how isolated and alienated they sometimes feel. 'I hear from so many people that they feel isolated and alone
feeling during this awakening and this massive paradigm shift that is happening all over the world.
Spouses can't wake partners up for
the truth, family members and close friends think
that you have become strange' (quoted in Van Buuren 2016).

Reinforcing the suffering of others

The accusations that conspiracy theorists point at
Those who they believe are responsible for the injustice and evil border on libel and slander. For example, at recent events in Bodegraven, where conspiracy theorists laid flowers and wreaths at
the graves of deceased children who, in their view, were victims of satanic paedophile networks of the elite, his relatives are deeply hurt.

What is the danger of conspiracy thinking?

Conspiracy thinking can remain stuck at the level of passive acquisition; people read about it, attach value to it and will occasionally show this to others
(McArthur 1995). This can be followed by an activist level, where the message is actively passed on.
because people think that others should take note of
the scandal and must be protected, for example, against the adverse effects of vaccination. In the most extreme – and fortunately rare – case, however,
Risk and threat also exist in terms of violence. The outrage over the conspiracy can be so strong that the moral boundary of violence is crossed – activism radicalizes into extremism (Moskalenko & McCauley 2009).

A recent population study conducted in Germany shows that conspiracy thinking is positively correlated
with an affinity for extremist violence, albeit strongly dependent on individual differences (Rottweiler &
Gill 2020). The effect is stronger for individuals with lower self-control, reduced confidence in the
rule of law and a strong belief that they have the ability to solve problems themselves.
In the Netherlands, mass aggression (such as at the Capitol in Washington on January 6, 2021) has so far been absent, but we are seeing an increase in serious intimidation and threats by conspiracy theorists against people who play a key role in combating the pandemic, as well as their family members. This is

mainly takes place in the online environment, but increasingly also offline, with unwanted visits to the home or
aggressive approaches. The wave of arson attacks on 5G masts is an example of aggression that
is very likely strongly inspired by conspiracy theories. Sometimes conspiracy theorists commit aggression from an organized context that often has associations with extremist groups.
According to the

The Public Prosecution Service received more than four hundred reports of corona-related crimes between March 2020 and March 2021, many of which were threats and violent incidents directed against the police, BOAs and healthcare workers (NCTV 2021). Compared to delusions, the collective aspect of conspiracy thinking poses a potentially greater danger (see Figure 1). The collective outrage over the perceived injustice can be enough to cross the moral line into dangerous behavior, especially when contact with like-minded people, as in so-called *echo chambers,* has the upper hand. A specific risk emanates from people who are more susceptible to conspiracy theories due to an underlying psychological vulnerability and who act accordingly. Research into 66 QAnon followers, A popular far-right conspiracy theory group arrested in the United States for various crimes found that 44% had a traumatic event (such as abuse) precede their radicalization (Jensen & Kane 2021).

Of the 35 QAnon followers arrested in the storming of the Capitol, 63% were found to be struggling with mental health issues such as PTSD, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Are conspiracy theories paranoid delusions?

At first glance, there are many similarities between conspiracy thinking and paranoid delusions, but conspiracy theories delusions as defined in psychiatry? A commonly used (DSM-5) definition of a delusion is 'a false belief based on incorrect inferences from external reality, which is firmly held despite the ideas of almost everyone else and despite unambiguous evidence or indications to the contrary. The idea is not of such a nature that it can be accepted by other members of the culture whether the subculture is accepted'. This definition is based on the work of Jaspers (1923), who emphasized pointed to the false content of the idea, the fixed conviction, and the lack of openness to counterarguments. Although this remains the core of the psychiatric definition of a delusion to this day, repeatedly it has been argued that virtually all parts of the definition are problematic (David 1999; van der Zwaard 2006). The conspiracy theories surrounding the coronavirus pandemic show that this definition may need to be tightened or deepened.

Incorrect ideas

Although history has shown that some conspiracy theories turned out to be true upon closer inspection, many conspiracy theories are highly unlikely and often demonstrably false. The content of Corona conspiracy theories range from paranoid thoughts about powerful companies to bizarre beliefs about a global elite that systematically and massively sexually abuses and sacrifices children for their blood to drink, vaccines that contain microchips to monitor us, or the coronavirus that was released as a military biological weapon to control overpopulation to fight on Earth. Concerns about the great power of Companies and governments are generally accepted, understandable, and plausible. However, the bizarre, impossible content of extreme coronavirus conspiracy theories seems strong. on the content of paranoid delusions. In both cases Are the ideas incorrect on rational and objective grounds? In recent years, the continuum model of psychosis has been widely used, in which paranoid delusions not qualitatively different from normal suspicious thoughts, but only differ in degree from them in degree of conviction, preoccupation, distress, and irrational content (Van Os & Reininghaus 2016). Conspiracy thinking could be considered along the same continuum. The question then is when conspiracy theories are irrational enough to be labeled as delusional and how can it be determined whether

the theory in question is sufficiently an incorrect inference from external reality.

Persistence despite evidence to the contrary

A key characteristic of delusions is their persistence, even when there's clear evidence or indications to the contrary. Many delusions, however, are difficult or impossible to refute. How can you prove that the secret service isn't after someone? And what counts as sufficient evidence? Conceptually,

So this is also a complicated part of the definition (Bentall et al. 2001). In conspiracy theories, this is no different, because they arise precisely in a context of social discontent, (alleged) abuses and uncertainty, which makes the paranoid ideas almost impossible to refute.

Conspiracy theorists also cling tenaciously to their beliefs. They often carry an abundance of 'evidence' for their theories, such as texts from websites, individual quotes, or video clips. Conspiracy theorists also use other sources of epistemic knowledge to support their ideas, such as spiritual, physical or emotional experiences (Harambam 2017). In conversations with conspiracy thinkers it often appears That objective facts and rational arguments are not decisive. Just as with people with psychotic paranoid delusions, the belief is not susceptible to logical proof. When things happen that don't align with the idea, they are ignored or reframed so that they fit within the belief.

For example, QAnon adherents expected that Joe Biden's inauguration day as President of the United States would turn into *The Great Awakening-ning,* the moment when the elite, including Biden himself, would be exposed and arrested. When that didn't happen, it wasn't proof they were wrong, but on closer inspection, Biden was on the right side after all (Roose 2021).

So conspiracy theories are not necessarily about
Correlating facts. For example, a study showed that people who believed one conspiracy theory about Princess Diana's death also often considered other, incompatible conspiracy theories about her death plausible (Wood et al. 2012). Multiple, incompatible ideas can coexist without any problem.

It's the deeper paranoia.

Not fitting into subculture

An additional criterion for a delusion is that the
belief is shared by almost no one and is not appropriate for one's sociocultural background or subculture. If you are in an environment
where belief in spirits is the norm, it is not a delusion to attribute setbacks in your life to evil
Influence of evil spirits. In a deeply religious environment, it's not a delusion to feel chosen by God.
Many thousands of people form a subculture of conspiracy thinkers in corona conspiracy theories. You can
join QAnon, but also feel connected to artists, models and other influencers who
spreading conspiracy theories on social media. Such as
As previously mentioned, extreme corona conspiracy theories have shifted towards mainstream thinking (Freeman et al. 2020), and therefore no longer fit within the definitions of a delusion.

There is a caveat to this, however. In a world of the internet and social media,
Ideas spread like wildfire. Fact and fiction are not easy to distinguish in the mediatized world.
(Harambam 2017). Ideas quickly gain enormous reach, especially when influencers embrace them. There's an online subculture for almost every opinion, no matter how extreme or bizarre. This criterion for a delusion

has thus become more difficult to use than before the Internet era.

Idiosyncratic experiences

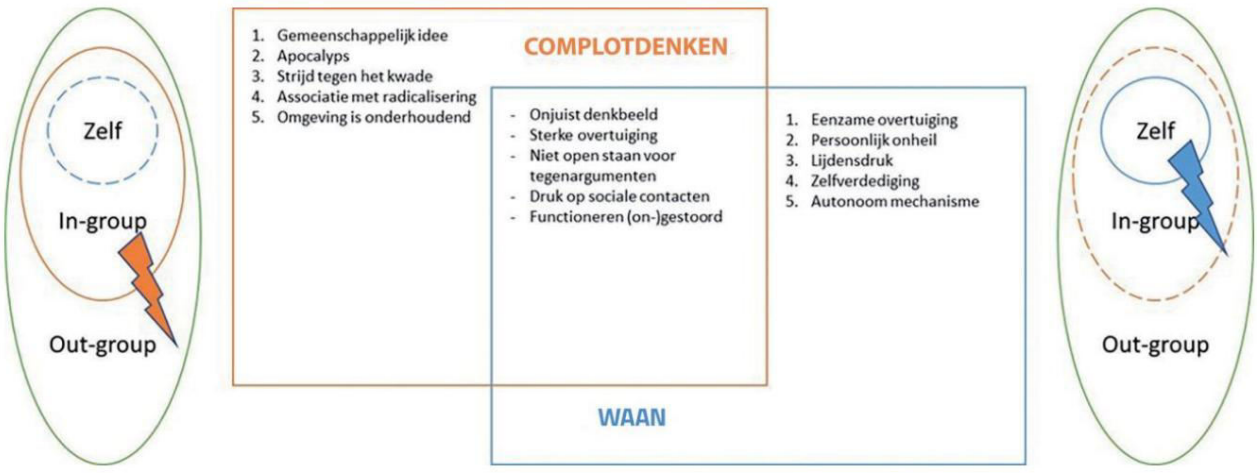
Several authors have pointed out that current definitions of delusions are incomplete, perhaps even missing the core of the delusion

(David 1999; Feyaerts et al. 2021). A delusion is not just a false idea that is persistently held
held despite rational counterarguments. The way people experience reality is perhaps at least as important in delusions as the content of the delusion. Jaspers (1923) distinguished between
delusions and excessive ideas, in which he saw delusions as a result of a radical change in the way meaning is given to events,
while overvalued ideas correspond more to passionate political or religious
beliefs.

It is important to look more closely at the idiosyncratic rather than shared perception of reality. Unlike conspiracy theorists, people with paranoid delusions are almost always the only target (see Figure 1). The secret service is there for one reason or another.
drove after them, and not after their housemates.
People on the street specifically follow them and will only harm them; others are not in danger. They are called to save the world, television programs
They talk specifically about them; their thoughts are broadcast. They are not inclined to inquire with others whether they are also affected or at risk.
People with delusions may incorporate conspiracy theories into their ideas, but these fit their own private, idiosyncratic experiences of reality.

How do these idiosyncratic experiences arise? A clinical-phenomenological model points to qualitative
changes in the experience of reality, to which the content of thought then conforms
(Feyaerts et al. 2021). Subtle changes can occur in self-awareness, sensory reality

Figure 1. Differences and similarities between conspiracy thinking and delusions



ity and intersubjectivity, which makes everyday normality uncertain. Delusions are formed because people experience themselves differently than normal, because
the reality around them appears somewhat different
occurs or because they experience social interactions differently
(Sass & Byrom 2015).
Neuropsychological and cognitive models of delusions describe these processes as perceptual anomalies, excessive meaning-making, hyper-reflexivity, thinking errors such as selective attention and external attribution style, errors in self-representation and mentalization (Broyd et al.

2017). The paranoid content of the delusion is naturally colored by events, circumstances, and memories.

Conspiracy theorists seem to be less concerned with idiosyncratic, personal experiences. Their starting point lies in significant social, societal, or political events that create uncertainty, loss of control, and

causing discontent. In times of crisis, people find each other in paranoid theories that give more control
on what's happening. Conspiracy theorists find solidarity and meaning in fighting a common enemy. We are being threatened, not just me.

The conspiracy ideas are less based on unusual experiences of the self, reality or interpersonal contacts; there is a hidden reality

which must be brought to light together with the in-group.

Conclusions

Conspiracy thinking

Conspiracy theories are common. They seem to fit within the current psychiatric definitions of paranoid delusions. However, there are also important differences.
which make it clear that the current definitions of delusions need to be deepened. During the corona pandemic,
Conspiracy theories have moved towards mainstream thinking, due to the uncertainty and uncontrollability of all events, the great power of governments and companies and the impact of measures on society and personal lives.

Conspiracy thinking meets a need by providing clarity, certainty, and moral superiority in uncertain circumstances. It creates connection

with others who have acquired the same insights
and fight to expose conspiracies of the powerful. Ultimately, conspiracy theories lead
but often leads to more distrust and discomfort
(Douglas et al. 2017). Conspiracy thinking can also cause problems in the social network that the
often do not share ideas. Some conspiracy theorists become activists, but only a very small minority resort to violence. The risk of violence

appears to be associated with extreme right-wing sympathies and existing psychiatric problems.

Differences between delusion and conspiracy thinking

Conspiracy theories show similarities with
paranoid delusions regarding incorrect and sometimes bizarre content of ideas, strong conviction
which involves holding on to ideas and not being open to counterarguments. One difference is that
conspiracy thinkers are not alone in their beliefs, but actually find each other in their distrust towards
of powerful figures pulling the strings behind the scenes. Where delusion is lonely, conspiracy theories provide access to an in-group.

A second difference is that in the development of delusions idiosyncratic experiences of reality often play a role, which influence the paranoid content of the
induce delusional thinking. The comparison between
Paranoid delusions and corona conspiracy theories make it clear that the current definitions of delusions
need further investigation, because with the current definitions conspiracy thinking can also be classified under
delusions. Instead of the strong (cognitive) focus on the erroneous content of delusions, more attention should be paid
must be for the underlying idiosyncratic, altered form of the experience of reality. It is especially this idiosyncratic experience of reality that

leads to paranoid delusions as a result of attempts to gain control over perceptual anomalies (Feyaerts et al. 2021).

Best approach

Finally, the exploration in this article shows that the
the content of the ideas is not the right entry point to conspiracy thinkers and people with paranoid delusions
In both cases, rational arguments and appeals to a logical shared reality are largely ineffective. Conspiracy theorists are concerned with the powerlessness of citizens, the loss of freedom and control. It's about concern and anger about systems.

and power structures that create victims. People
People with paranoid delusions have lost their normal experience of reality, of themselves and of others, and try to give it meaning.

For both, reflective listening to this applies
underlying epistemic, existential and experiential questions do more justice to the real problems that people experience, and create more room for solutions
offers. Methods such as LEAP *(listen, emphasize, agree, partner),* developed for people with schizophrenia without insight into their illness, can be useful in dealing with conspiracy theorists (Amador 2000).
The focus is not on the strength of the arguments, but on the power

of the relationship.

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SUMMARY

Are conspiracy theorists psychotic? A comparison between conspiracy theories and paranoid delusions

W. Veling, B. Sizoo, J. van Buuren, C. van den Berg, W. Sewbalak, G. H. M. Pijnenborg, N. Boonstra, S. Castelein, L. van der Meer

Background Conspiracy theories are popular during the COVID-19 pandemic. Conspiratorial thinking is characterized by the strong conviction that a certain situation that one sees as unfair is the result of a deliberate conspiracy of a group of people with bad intentions. Conspiratorial thinking appears to have many similarities with paranoid delusions.

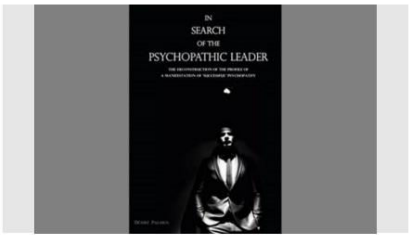
Aim To explore the nature, consequences, and social-psychological dimensions of conspiratorial thinking, and describe similarities and differences with paranoid delusions.

Method Critically assessing relevant literature about conspiratorial thinking and paranoid delusions.

Results Conspiratorial thinking meets epistemic, existential, and social needs. It provides clarity in uncertain times and connection with an in-group of like-minded people. Both conspiratorial thinking and paranoid delusions involve an unfair, persistent, and sometimes bizarre conviction. Unlike conspiracy theorists, people with a paranoid delusion are almost always the only target of the presumed conspiracy, and they usually stand alone in their conviction. Furthermore, conspiracy theories are not based as much on unusual experiences of their inner self, reality, or interpersonal contacts.

Conclusions Conspirational thinking is common in uncertain circumstances. It gives grip, certainty, moral superiority and social support. Extreme conspirational thinking seems to fit current psychiatric definitions of paranoid delusions, but there are also important differences. To make a distinction with regard to conspiratorial thinking, deepening of conventional definitions of delusions is required. Instead of the strong focus on the erroneous content of delusions, more attention should be given to the underlying idiosyncratic, changed way of experiencing reality.

Psychopathy: From Criminality to Leadership



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In psychology and psychiatry, the diagnosis of psychopathy is used for ruthless criminals. These individuals are selfish, egocentric, and manipulative. A psychopathic individual is focused on exploiting others, without feelings of guilt or shame, and is fearless. These individuals often end up in prison or TBS (detention). However, there are also many people who score high on psychopathy and manage to avoid incarceration. These individuals can hold high leadership positions in business, politics, and government.

How is it that some psychopathic individuals can hold leadership positions for extended periods, while others end up in crime? Désiré Palmen will defend her dissertation, "In Search of the Psychopathic Leader: The Deconstruction of the Profile of a Manifestation of 'Successful' Psychopathy," at the Open University in Heerlen on Friday, December 17, 2021, at 4:00 PM.

Personality Profile of Psychopathic Leaders

Until now, scientific research on psychopathy has primarily focused on convicted criminals in prison. Désiré Palmen conducted research on a different group of psychopathic individuals: those with this personality profile who hold leadership positions.
Psychopathic traits in leaders (male or female) negatively impact employee well-being, company performance, ethical conduct, and the financial health of an organization or institution. Therefore, it is important to develop a screening tool for psychopathic personality traits for key leadership positions in business, politics, and government.

Previous research suggests that a psychopathic leader is just as egocentric, manipulative, and antisocial as the psychopathic person in prison, but less impulsive and even better at playing others.

Development and objective of PL model

Désiré Palmen mapped the personality traits of psychopathic leaders, comparing them with the personality profile of psychopathic criminals in prison. Several distinguishing characteristics ensure that a psychopathic leader can continue to function and get away with antisocial behavior in the workplace. Désiré Palmen's dissertation shows that psychopathic leaders share the same defects in conscience and emotionality: they are just as unscrupulous and antisocial. However, psychopathic individuals who rise to become CEOs or leaders of political parties are smarter. They are better at planning and thinking ahead. They also know exactly which communication techniques to use to come across as a strong and talented leader during job interviews and afterward. Moreover, these psychopathic leaders enjoy being in charge of others.

Désiré Palmen developed the PL model, the model of the psychopathic leader. This model maps the personality traits of psychopathic leaders in such a way that it can serve as a basis for developing new assessments to measure psychopathy in this specific group.

Promotion Désiré Palmen

Désiré Palmen (born 1973, Kerkrade) is a researcher at the Undermining research group and a lecturer at Avans University of Applied Sciences. She is pursuing her doctorate as an external PhD candidate at the Faculty of Law. She will defend her dissertation, "In Search of the Psychopathic Leader: The Deconstruction of the Profile of a Manifestation of 'Successful' Psychopathy," at the Open University in Heerlen on Friday, December 17, 2021, at 4:00 PM. Her supervisors are Prof. Emile Kolthoff, Open University, and Prof. Jan Derksen, Vrije Universiteit Brussel. The defense can be followed live via ou.nl/live.

Source: Open University

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